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ABSTRACT

This issue of "The Goldfinch" focuses on Iowa history. The booklet is divided into two sections. Section 1, "Features," contains the following: (1) "Looking for History"; (2) "Talking History"; (3) "Climbing the Family Tree"; (4) "Tribal Storytelling"; (5) "News About You"; (6) "History Hangouts"; (7) "Documenting History"; (8) "Textiles Tell the Tale"; (9) "Iowa's Cool Collections"; and (10) "Meet an Iowa Kid Collector." Section 2, "Departments," contains: (1) "Wild Rosie's Map"; (2) "History Mystery"; (3) "Activity: Highway History Hunt"; (4) "Activity: Where in Iowa?"; (5) "Activity: Be a Photo Historian"; (6) "Activity: Iowa History Word Find"; (7) "Goldfinch Fiction: 'Attic Adventures'"; (8) "History Makers"; (9) "Goldie's Challenge"; (10) "Answers"; and (11) "The Roost." (EH)

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Goldfinch
Iowa History for Young People
Volume 17, Number 1 Fall 1995
Where is Iowa History?
Read this issue of *The Goldfinch* and find out!

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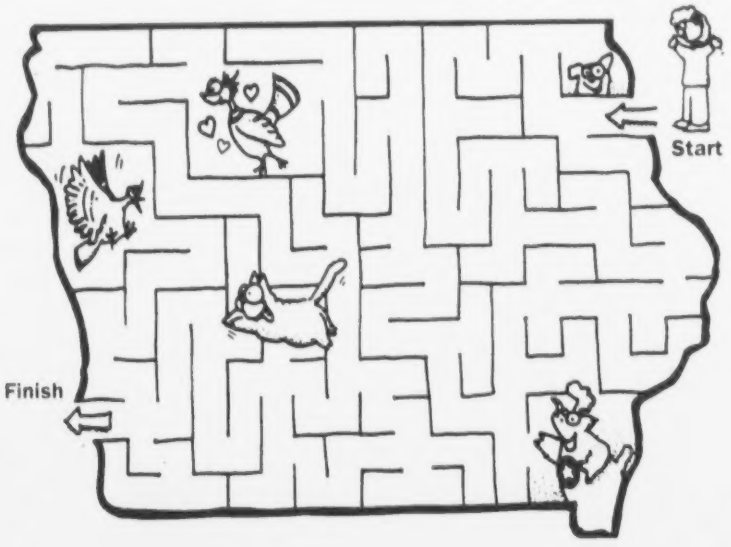
Wild Rosie's Map

Our a - MAZE - ing state!

In this issue of *The Goldfinch* you'll be traveling all over Iowa looking for (and finding!) Iowa history. Help Wild Rosie find her way through the Iowa history maze below. Which direction is she traveling? Name the states she is traveling away from and toward. Answers on page 30.



History Mystery

What's happening on the cover of *The Goldfinch*? We think the kids from the 1950s are being interviewed by a radio reporter because they built a neat car in their hometown of Des Moines.

What do you think?

Write a story, song, poem, or play about the mystery photo! The first five kids who send their creative writing to us by October 1, 1995, will receive a free prize.

The Goldfinch

Winner of a 1994 Parents' Choice Honor Award

Volume 17, Number 1
Fall 1995

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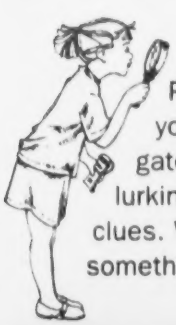
Meet *The Goldfinch* gang

Attention new *Goldfinch* readers! We'd like you to meet two special cartoon characters: Goldie and Rosie. Look for them throughout *The Goldfinch* and especially in "The Roost," their favorite hangout on page 31.



Iowa Investigator

State Sleuth

P.S. In this issue you'll also run into the Iowa Investigator and the State Sleuth. They'll be lurking around looking for Iowa history clues. When you see them you'll know something's up!

In celebration of Iowa's 150th birthday, every fifth-grade classroom in Iowa will receive free issues of *The Goldfinch* during the 1995/96 school year. This is the first of four issues to be distributed.

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LOOKING FOR HISTORY

by Amy Ruth

Where is Iowa history?

That's like asking, "Where is the sky?" or "Where is the air we breathe?" In other words, Iowa history is everywhere!

As Iowans, we're always walking past, through, over, and around Iowa history. Even though we can't escape it, we sometimes don't notice it.

You run into Iowa history when you look in the mirror. You probably see it at the dinner table when your grandparents or other friends and relatives pop by for a visit. You're bound to meet it in your neighborhood, where each building has its own tale to tell. And it's always in your own mind, where you store the memories of your life in Iowa.

In this issue of *The Goldfinch*, you'll learn where and how to look for Iowa history so you'll be sure to notice it in your community. We'll look in three easy spots — people, places, and things.

People

Think of all the people you know — your family, friends, and other members of your community. We'll tell how to gather and save the stories of their lives.

Places

Next, we'll show you where to look for history in your community. Cool places to check out include museums, businesses, school trophy displays, antique stores, and even your own home!

Things

Finally, we'll tell you about things. You'll learn about collections and collecting and meet an Iowa kid who donated part of his collection to a museum! You'll get the scoop on everyday items and learn how to pick the history out of documents like old letters and diaries.

Have fun playing our tricky Iowa history games and figuring out stuff from Iowa's past. But most of all, enjoy your tour of Iowa history. Now get ready for a true adventure! Turn the page, and you're off! ■

P.S. Hope you don't mind, but the Iowa Investigator and the State Sleuth want to tag along!

by Colleen A. Kemps

PEOPLE

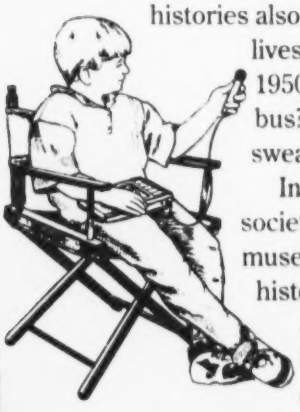
Talking history

History doesn't always live in books and attics. You can find it in people, too!

What tales do your family members tell? Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives and friends are full of stories about what life was like before you were born. Their stories are a part of history.

One way to save these stories is to conduct oral history interviews. By capturing someone's personal history on audio or video tape you document their memories of a time in Iowa's past.

Oral histories tell us how ordinary people felt about what happened in the past. While your grandparents may not have fought in World War II, they can still tell you how the war affected them. Oral histories also tell us about people's daily lives. What was school like in the 1950s? Did kids walk or take a bus? Did they wear jeans and sweatshirts to class?



In Iowa, many historical societies, public libraries, and museums have collected oral history interviews. Some groups concentrate on recollections by people who remember certain events or who share a similar background.

The Nodaway Valley Museum in Clarinda has recorded interviews with African-American Iowans. The Sheldon Public Library keeps tapes of interviews with men and women who attended one-room schools.

William Kreuger, director of the Cedar Rapids History Center, and other historians hope more young people will conduct oral history interviews with friends and relatives. They offer these hints:

1 Prepare a list of written questions in advance.
2 Make sure your recording equipment works and that you have spare batteries.
3 Begin the interview by recording the date and place of interview, the name, age, and address of the person you're interviewing as well as your name, age, and address.
4 Ask questions in a clear voice.
5 When the interview is over **transcribe** the tape. Store the tape in a cool, dry place.
6 Donate a copy of the tape and your transcribed interview to your public library or local historical society. ■

transcribe — make a written copy of a recording

PEOPLE

by Bridgett M. Williams

Climbing the family tree

Find the history in your family!

The Mather family (to the right) is having fun on a camping trip near the Cedar River in the mid-1890s.

The man on the ground is William (Will) Mather. In 1851, when he was five years old, the Mather family moved to Springdale, Iowa from Ohio. Will liked to brag that he was the first to arrive at the family's new farm. He ran ahead of the wagons, driving a small herd of cattle.

And who is the baby sitting on her father's knee with an older sister? That's Jeanne — a future genealogist (jean-ee-AH-low-jist). Genealogists try to identify all of their relatives, sometimes creating family trees that show family relationships. Some family trees go back for hundreds of years! During her lifetime, Jeanne Mather Lord recorded thousands of family stories.

It's easy to be your family's genealogist if you like detective work. Start by interviewing older relatives. Write down all the names mentioned, the towns in which their relatives lived, and the stories that make each person memorable. Keep all your information in one notebook.

Next, look for more information in written documents. Ask relatives if they have items like death and birth notices and birth and marriage certificates. Copy this information in your notebook.

Written documents can be tricky because of misspellings and mix-ups. Genealogists have to **interpret** the information they find because of this.

Some relatives are extremely hard to find. It may also be hard to track family roots if you're part of a nontraditional family unit. Remarried and adopted relatives are also challenging. As families blend together, some names disappear.

Try to keep your family's history up to date by recording new information, such as births and deaths, in your notebook. As an official genealogist, your work is never done! ■

7 interpret — try to explain the meaning of something

Story and photo by Millie K. Frese

Tribal storytelling

Pictured from left to right: Adeline Wanatee, mother of Don Wanatee, father of Donnielle Bear, wife of Jay Bear, parents of Jay Bear, Jr.

Jay Bear, Jr. belongs to the Mesquakie Indian tribe and lives in Tama County. He is less than six months old, but he's already learning Mesquakie history. His Indian name, "Hooded Bear," is as ancient as the world.

In the old days, tribal history passed from generation to generation when family members gathered to exchange stories of life before the European Americans came to Iowa. The stories passed on customs and traditions, preparing children for their responsibilities in tribal life.

"We must teach our young from the very beginning," said Jay's **maternal** grandfather, Don Wanatee (WAH-nah-tee), 62. "They don't understand, but if we wait, they are lost."

Adeline Wanatee, 84, was prepared for adult life by the stories her parents and grandparents told.

Cooking, caring for her family, raising her children — these, said Adeline, "are my sacred duties."

The old ways made it easier to teach Mesquakie children. When the sun set and the day's work was done, there was time for story telling. Today, there are more distractions. Television, telephones, and school activities interrupt time spent together.

"Some of the old ways fade away," Don said. Mesquakie men don't go away to hunt. People shop at grocery stores rather than growing traditional crops.

Although life isn't like it used to be, tribal stories link the Mesquakie with their heritage. To know themselves and who they are, the Mesquakie must first understand their history. But some Mesquakie worry that their stories and way of life will be lost.

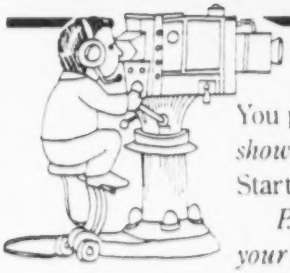
"There isn't a day that goes by that I don't worry," said Jay's mother, Donnielle Bear. "Will he know who he is? Who his **clan** is? What his tribe is like?"

With help from his parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, and uncles, Hooded Bear will learn his own story. His family will guide him, and he, in turn, will pass on what it means to be Mesquakie. ■

maternal— from mother's side of family

clan — group of families in a tribe

NEWS ABOUT YOU



It's the year 2050. A movie producer decides to make a movie of your life. You probably could *tell* the producer about your childhood in Iowa, but could you *show* what it was like growing up in the 1990s? Yes, but only if you prepare now! Start by completing the following activities that document your personal history.

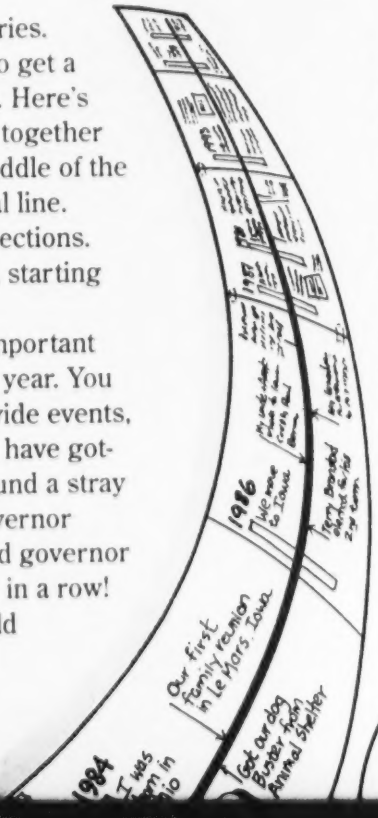
P.S. Fifty years from now when a movie producer or grandchild comes knocking on your door, you'll be ready to show them pieces of history!

Time for a Timeline

Just like history, your life is made up of many stories. Make a personal timeline to get a better look at these stories. Here's how. Tape pieces of paper together into a long sheet. In the middle of the page draw a long horizontal line. Divide the line into equal sections. Assign each section a year, starting with your birth year.

Write and draw a few important things that happened each year. You may want to include statewide events, too. For instance, you may have gotten a cool new bike and found a stray cat in 1994 — the year Governor Terry Branstad was elected governor of Iowa for the fourth time in a row!

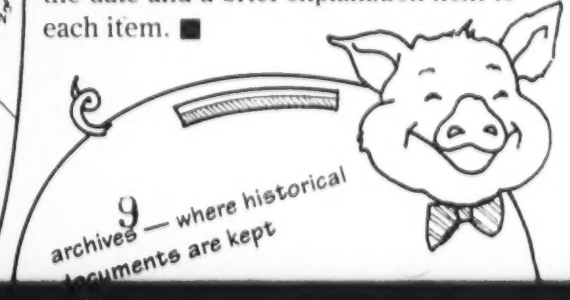
When each year ends, add another piece of paper and update your stories! ■



Scrapbooks: History's Savings Accounts

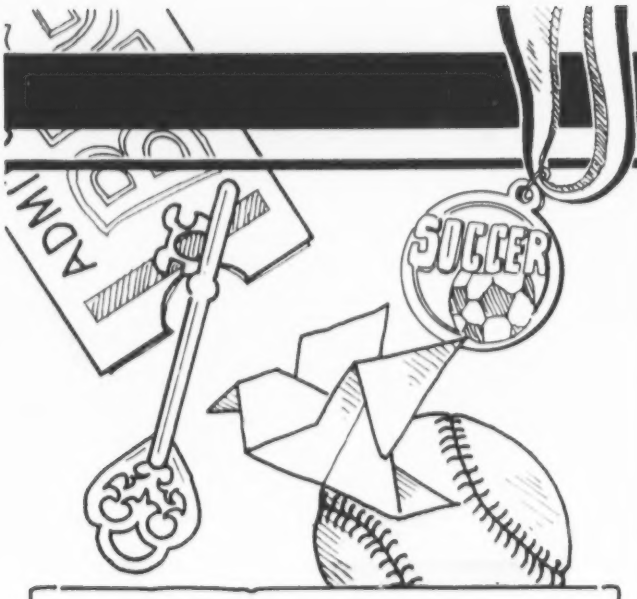
A scrapbook is like a savings account where you deposit things that are important to you. Iowans have used scrapbooks to save comic strips, poems, greeting cards, photographs, and dried flowers. Today, some Iowans' scrapbooks are stored in the State Historical Society **archives** for safekeeping.

To make your scrapbook, pick themes that illustrate who you are and what you're all about — school, sports, family, hobbies, best friends. Buy a scrapbook, or make one by stapling paper together in a booklet. Now start filling it with your stuff. Write the date and a brief explanation next to each item. ■



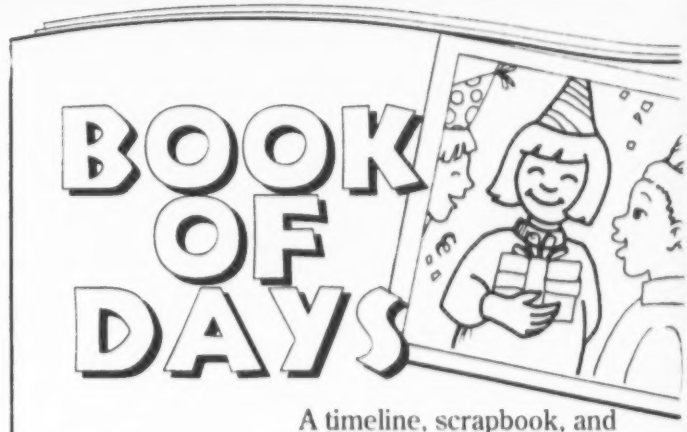
archives — where historical documents are kept

NEWS ABOUT YOU



History Box

Think of some of the important objects in your life. Perhaps you treasure an autographed baseball or a "straight-A" report card. What kind of everyday stuff is important in your life? A copy of your local newspaper gives movie listings. A bus ticket tells where you've been. Gather some of these objects and put them in any kind of container to make a history box. Remember to collect things that record your life, your personality, and your achievements. Add to the history box each year to continue your life's story. ■



BOOK OF DAYS

A timeline, scrapbook, and history box document your "everydays." But what about the special days— the anniversaries, birthdays and other special occasions? Make a list of these extra-special days in your life. Next, write about how and why you celebrate them, who celebrates with you, and what each day says about your personal history. Leave room for drawings or photographs! Finally, design a book cover out of construction paper. Don't forget to include information about the author (you!) and date your work. When you've completed the document, staple the pages together to make a booklet. ■

Illustration by Mary Moye-Rowley Stories by Amy Ruth

PLACES HISTOR

Hey! Check it out. We dug up four photos that show off places in Iowa history!

Some of the scenes are of public places where Iowans gathered in different times to accomplish different things.

Private places, like the bark lodge pictured to the right, give clues to home and family life.

What are some of the public and private places in your community? Has there always been a Quick Trip next to the movie theatre? Where did people shop before there were Wal-Marts? When did your area get its first park? What do these places tell you about Iowa's past?

Scout around your community and ask about the history of a place that interests you. Then send *The Goldfinch* a story, essay, or drawing about it, and we'll send you a free prize.

Meanwhile, read on to discover what *The Goldfinch* learned about four places in Iowa history.

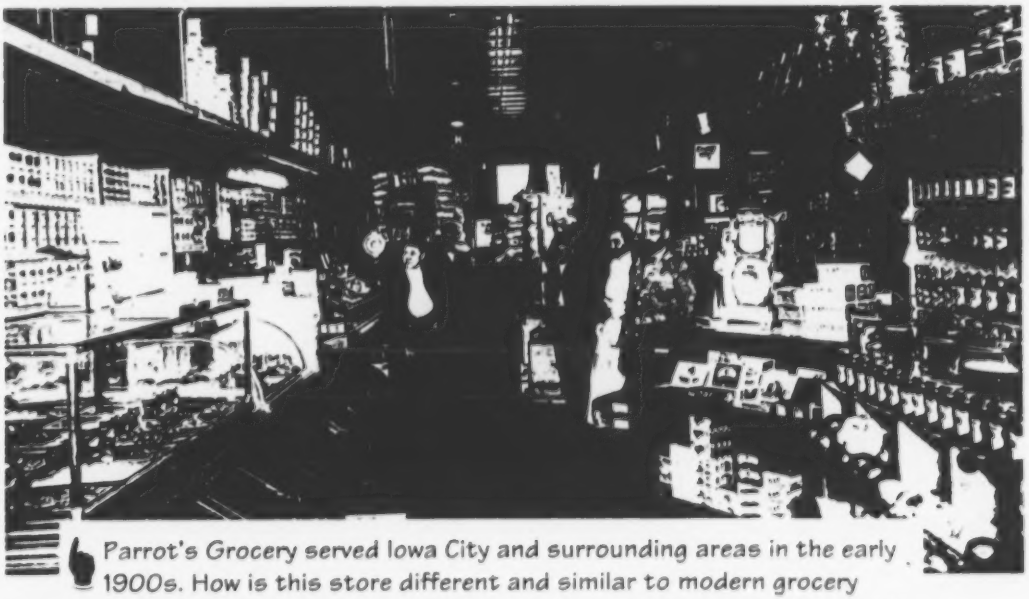
Living History Farms

This Ioway Indian bark lodge at Living History Farms in Urbandale shows how the first Iowans set up their households. How have others in Iowa history made homes for themselves and their families? Check out the history of your own home. When was it built? What is it made of? Who else has lived there?

SHSI (Iowa City)

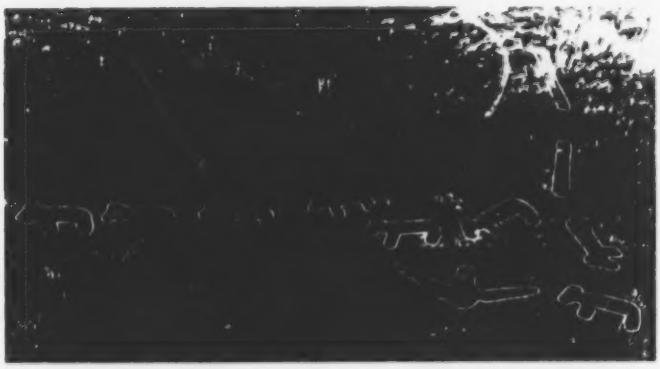
Sol Butler (left) and a fellow athlete were University of Dubuque track stars. The display pictured tells the stories of their athletic successes. Does your school or community center have a trophy display? Whose stories do the trophies and medals tell? How far back do the dates go?

HANGOUTS PLACES



SHSI (Iowa City)

Parrot's Grocery served Iowa City and surrounding areas in the early 1900s. How is this store different and similar to modern grocery stores? What does this photograph tell us about grocery shopping in Iowa's past? What's the story behind the stores in your community? Are they small, neighborhood stores or modern supermarkets?



SHSI (Iowa City)

Thousands of years ago, Native Americans in northeastern Iowa built mounds in the shape of sacred animals. Tribe members were buried here. The mounds are located in what is today Effigy Mounds Park. The outlines of the animal shapes are only visible from the air.

What does the natural environment in your community look like? How have people changed the natural environment in your community?

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PLACES

by Elaine Croyle Bezanson

Highway history hunt

Take the road to adventure!

A car trip on Iowa's highways can put you on the road toward adventure. In rest areas along Interstate highways, on major roads, and in city parks throughout Iowa, there are 44 official historical markers that tell the stories of people, places, and things in Iowa's history.

The State Legislature established a historical marker system in 1965. The first marker, placed near the Mississippi River at Davenport, tells about Buffalo Bill Cody and the construction of the first bridge across the mighty river.

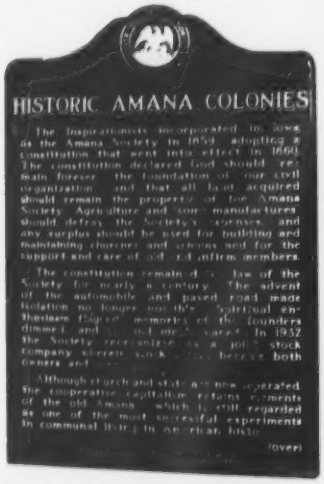
To begin your Iowa adventure, travel to a historical marker in your community. Be sure to bring along your imagination. Read the stories on the six-foot-tall blue and silver metal markers and imagine what life was like in Iowa in a different time.

To receive a list of Iowa's official historical markers, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *The Goldfinch*. ■

Make your mark on history

Besides official historical markers, there are hundreds of unofficial markers in communities across the state. You can design your own "unofficial" historical marker to tell about an interesting place in your community. Here's what to do:

1 Pick a place that you think is important, like the hospital where you were born, the oldest building in your town, or your grandparents' farm.
2 Be a state sleuth. Find out all you can about the place you've chosen by interviewing people in your community — a librarian, teacher, or older resident. Write down everything you learn.
3 Design your marker. Include the information you've gathered, your name, and a picture that tells about you.
4 Decide what materials to use — construction paper, cardboard, or even a large rock. Iowa's markers are made out of metal to withstand the weather. Use marking pens, crayons, or paint to **inscribe** words on your marker.
5 Ask permission before placing your marker.



This historical marker gives information about the history in the Amana Colonies in eastern Iowa.

inscribe — write permanently

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Where in Iowa?

Where do you go for tons of tulips and wooden shoes? How about a peek at a gigantic cow and calf or a cool clock museum?

It's all waiting to be discovered right here in Iowa, where Pella turns out tulips and wooden shoes, Des Moines kids get a kick out of the Anderson Erickson Dairy cow and calf, and Spillville residents always know what time it is thanks to the Bily Clocks Museum.

Each of Iowa's 950 cities and towns and 99 counties is known for something — including yours!

Find out what your community's speciality is, then represent it with a picture postcard of a person, place, or thing out of Iowa's past or present.

Follow the instructions below and give your community a place in Iowa history! ■

Anderson Erickson Dairy Co., Des Moines

Annie, the Anderson Erickson Dairy cow pictured above, came to the dairy in the 1960s. Eric, her calf and companion, arrived in the 1970s. Together they are a Des Moines landmark and represent the AE Dairy, founded in 1930.

1 Find the people, places, or things that best represent your community, then illustrate or photograph them.

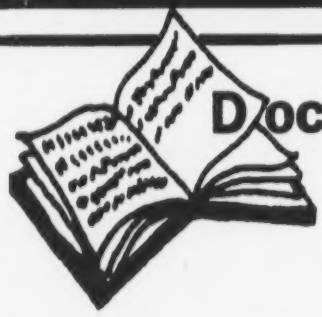
2 Attach your pictures to construction paper or lightweight cardboard rectangles, 3-and-a-half inches tall by 5-inches wide.

3 Write greetings and addresses on the back. Include information about your community's specialty.

4 Send postcards to friends across Iowa and the country. Save a set of postcards in your history box. (See page 9.)

5 Send a postcard to *The Goldfinch*. We'll store all postcards in our archives. You and your community will go down in history!

Stories by Michelle Rubin



Documenting history

Today's newspapers, diaries, party invitations, report cards, and other written records are tomorrow's historical clues!

We often think history is written after it happens and then shows up in textbooks.

Fortunately, some documents record history in the making. These documents, called primary sources, are more interesting than textbooks because they are the first instances in which information is recorded.

Letters, diaries, business records, party invitations, receipts, and newspapers are all examples of primary sources. While they aren't originally intended to record history, they become important tools for discovering the past.

Receipts tell us how much things cost. When we compare yesterday's prices to today's, we can see how much things have changed. Newspapers are filled with reports of everyday happenings, and letters and diaries tell us what has been important to Iowans.

The State Historical Society of Iowa **preserves** these primary sources to help historians, young and old, learn about the past.

You might have primary sources stored away in your home. Your grandfather's letters and your birth certificate are also primary sources.

So how do historians use primary sources to research and write history? They try to understand information in primary sources by asking questions as they read the documents.

When was the document written?

Knowing the date of a document helps historians understand the information better by determining what else was happening at the time, such as a war or an election. Knowing about these events helps historians understand the writer's thoughts and opinions.

Who wrote the document?

Different people have different points of view, and figuring out whose point of view the document reflects helps historians analyze the information in a document. A young farm boy in the 1890s will have a different point of view than a Des Moines youth living in the city during the same time.

What was the document's purpose?

A diary is a place to keep private thoughts and secrets while a postcard is used to share information with others. This difference will influence what information is included by the writer.

Historians use the answers to these questions to fill in details of the stories they are trying to tell. What other information do you think is important to keep in mind when you're reading primary documents? ■

preserve — protect from damage

Effie's diary

We found the diary of Effie (ef-FEE) Maloney in the Society's archives. In 1876, 13-year-old Effie moved to Dennison, Iowa from Illinois. That information—that Effie was 13, lived in Illinois, and moved to Dennison in 1876 — was all in her diary. Her entries are full of information that tell about a young girl's life on an Iowa farm in the 1870s. For instance, on March 30, 1876, Effie wrote:

We had quite a storm last night: thunder, lightning and rain, the first bad storm I have seen in Iowa. Our school has been over about a month. John, Mary and I all begin again the first of May. Four weeks and then school.

From this we learn that school let out in March. Later in the diary, we learn that this break allowed students to stay home and help their parents on the family farm.

To learn more about Effie's life, read the following excerpts and then answer the questions below. ■

Your turn

1 Why did Effie consider Iowa "away out west"?
2 Why did Effie miss so much school?
3 Name three things you learned about Iowa history from reading Effie's diary.

It has been a long time since I wrote and a great many things have transpired since then. We do not live on the old place in Illinois anymore. Instead of that we have sold the old place . . . for 2400 dollars and bought a place away out west in Iowa of 240 acres for the same as we got for our place.

I have not been to school today. Last night we had a snow storm but not a very bad one though. I was so cold that I could not go to school.

I have just got home from school. I am so excited and in such a hurry that I can't hardly write. There is a prairie fire a little ways from the house and the men folks are all gone to see it. Hope it don't do any damage. Later: The fire has done not hurt. All went out, but it left its mark on the prairie.

Friday I did not come to school. I had to stay at home to iron.

Yesterday I did not come to school because I had to stay at home and work. Night before last we planted string beans, squashes, pumpkins and and tonight we will plant some muskmellons and watermellons.

citron — fruit similar to a lemon

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BE A PHOTO

SHSI (Iowa City)/Foster Collection

TEST YOURSELF: Study this photograph of Iowa Falls kids for 30 seconds. Now close the magazine and write down everything you remember seeing in the picture. (Don't peek!) How'd you do?

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HISTORIAN

by Amy Ruth

make a list of

Picture this: You're visiting friends or relatives. Someone says, "Let's explore the attic!" *Too spooky*, you think to yourself, but you follow your friend up the dark, narrow stairs anyway. You expect to find ghosts and ghoolies. Instead you trip over Iowa history. Not bad for a scaredy cat!

A historian like yourself can learn a lot about Iowa history from old photos. By using the people, places, and things in photographs you'll uncover clues about the past. You need to study old photos carefully to find important clues. Clothes, hairstyles, furniture, and other things can tell you what year or decade a photograph was taken. In the photo to the left, for example, the girls' dresses were popular in the early 1900s.

Now that you know what it takes to be a photo historian, study the photograph to the left and answer the questions below.

1 What are these kids doing?

2 Where do you think they learned how to play like this?

3 What did some Iowa girls in the early 1900s wear to play outside?

4 What does this photo tell you about toys and games in Iowa history?

5 How much have games and playing equipment changed in the last 95 years?

6 Do you think these kids knew they were making history when this photograph was taken? Why or why not?

THINGS

There are stories in your stuff!

Imagine if you sealed your room up tomorrow, and it wasn't opened until the year 2095. What would your stuff tell historians about you and your time period?

Historians would use artifacts to investigate your history. Artifacts tell us how people lived their daily lives. Most artifacts were created to serve a purpose, from solving a problem to providing entertainment.

Say future historians find a helmet and knee pads in your room. These things were created to protect you when you go in-line skating or skateboarding, so they would tell historians something about what you liked to do for fun.

When historians look at an artifact, they ask a lot of questions to figure out what it is — Who made it? What kind of material was it made from? Why was it important?

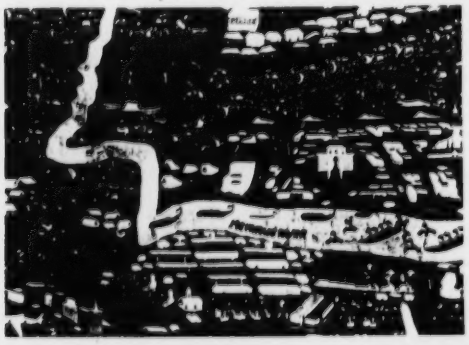
When you read the next article about story cloths, ask yourself the same questions. Then imagine the stories that are wrapped up in your own possessions.

— Michelle Rubin

Textiles tell the tale

story and photos by Millie K. Frese

A close-up view of Shoua's story cloth



Unfolding one of Shoua (Show-AH) Her's story cloths opens a window into centuries of **Hmong** (mung) history. The **textiles** illustrate the life of Shoua's tribe and tell the stories of her own family history.

Shoua was six years old when her mother taught her the needlework of traditional Hmong Pa Ndau (pan-DOW). She stitches by hand, without patterns, embroidering scenes of her home country of **Laos**.

Today, Shoua's great nephew, Peter Vang, 11, needs only to look at his great aunt's story cloths to learn his family history.

The only Hmong student attending Lincoln Elementary in Oskaloosa, Peter prefers jeans and t-shirts to traditional Hmong clothing and loves American sports. Still, he believes it's important to learn the history and

Laos — Asian country

Hmong — Asian ethnic group

THINGS

Shoua Her (also called Susan) and her nephew, Peter Yang, learn about their history from traditional handmade story cloths.

speak the language of his people. The images captured on the story cloths help make his Hmong heritage real for him.

One of his great aunt's story cloths shows a dangerous trip across the Mekong River, an airplane ride across an ocean, and a new life in the United States. This trip began in the 1970s when the Her family fled from wars in their homeland to find safety in the bordering country of Thailand. Shoua journeyed with her husband, Cha Yeu Her, and their five children for 20 days through jungles. They were on foot and traveled by night so they wouldn't be caught. Along the way, their sixth child, Choua (Chow-AH), was born.

A few days after Choua's birth, the family crossed the Mekong River into Thailand.

"Many people lost their lives crossing the river," Shoua said. "We were scared. We had no food. We had bare feet. Our shoes were broken in the jungle."

Sponsored by a local church, the Her family arrived in Oskaloosa in December 1979.

The Mekong River also flows through one of Shoua's largest story cloths. Choua, now a junior at Central College in Pella, explained that the Hmong first crossed the turbulent river centuries ago and arrived in Laos which was to be their new home. The Hmong cleared woodlands to grow crops. Shoua's fine stitches detail the planting, tending, and harvesting.

And for Peter, his great aunt's stitches remind him of something very important: "Our children," Shoua insists, "must know they are Hmong." ■

1. What does Peter learn when he looks at his great-aunt's story cloths?
2. How does your family pass on family stories?
3. If you moved to a new country, what Iowa traditions would you take with you?

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THINGS Iowa's Coo

During the Flood of '93, the State Historical Society of Iowa collected water jugs and sandbags. These items are important Iowa **artifacts** because they represent the experiences of thousands of Iowans during that long, wet summer.

Museum objects, such as the jugs and sandbags, are part of collections owned by museums. When objects are displayed in certain ways they tell stories from Iowa's past.

Someday an exhibit of flood artifacts will tell the story of the flood and those who suffered through it.

Everyday items — furniture, clothing, and even children's games and schoolbooks — also give clues to life in different times.

Individual collections, like the one on page 22, show how Iowans have entertained and expressed themselves and what's been important in their lives.

We've rounded up information about three of Iowa's many cool collections and collectors. Compare them to collections and collectors in your life! ■

— Amy Ruth

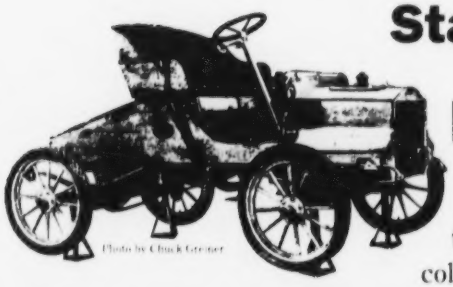

Photo by Chuck Gerdner

State Historical Society of Iowa

Imagine having enough room to keep everything you collect. You'd never have to throw anything away!

The State Historical Society of Iowa buildings in Iowa City and Des Moines have enough space for a green 1903 Cadillac car, a Native American bark lodge, an old farm plow, and thousands of books and photographs about Iowa and Iowans.

These museum and library collections keep the past alive for Iowa's current and future residents.

The Society's museum in Des Moines arranges **exhibits** that explore many areas of Iowa history.

Changing exhibits allows old and fragile objects to rest. Most of the time, only 10 to 15 percent of the Society's collection is on display. Undisplayed items are stored in a temperature-controlled room so they aren't damaged by mold, other bacteria, or rust.

Items in the Society's collections are sometimes donated by people who have something special or unusual to share with Iowans. Donated items often represent times and places that don't exist today.

What items in your collection might help Iowa's future citizens understand your life in 1995? ■

— Linzee Kull McCray

artifacts — objects made by humans

exhibit — museum display

Once a hospital, now a museum

The former hospital in Fayette County, pictured to the right, now houses a collection of historic farming, homemaking, and medical tools. Students come to this museum to learn about Fayette County in days gone by.

Visitors can see the medical instruments that doctors and nurses used in the early part of this century. Wheelchairs, medicine bottles, and other items are also on display.

Candle molds and spinning wheels tell the story of hard work in Iowa's homes, when candles and clothes were homemade, not store-bought.

This hospital-turned-museum is also a meeting place for community groups. Not only is history stored in this building, it happens here too, as the building finds new uses with the passing of time. ■

— Marie Hammersland Reyner

Photo by Marie Hammersland Reyner

West Union's historical society and museum was a hospital from 1903 to 1951. The author of the article to the left was born here in 1939.

1. How would you display a collection in your home or school?
2. What are some of the places in your community that collect Iowa history?
3. Interview a collector. How is his or her collection related to Iowa history?

Turn the page for more on collecting and collectors!

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THINGS

Meet an Iowa kid collector

Grant Thompson's toy collection includes Star Wars action figures.

Eleven-year-old Grant Thompson of Des Moines just might be the State Historical Society of Iowa's youngest **donor**.

When he was about five years old, he saw the movie *Ghostbusters* and liked it so much he started collecting Ghostbusters toys. Six years later, Grant and his dad, who is the Society's acting administrator, decided to donate Grant's collection of about 50 Ghostbusters toys to the Society's museum.

So how can a historical museum use a bunch of Ghostbusters toys? Grant said that the Society has no definite plans to use the collection right now, but it might someday be used to compare movies from the past with today's movies.

"Or in the future," Grant said, "when my dad doesn't work there anymore and we're all 80, they might find [the toys] down there in some dusty cupboard and use them in an exhibit of toys then and toys in the past."

Grant now focuses on his Star Wars and Star Trek collections and said he enjoys collecting primarily for the sport of it.

donor — person who gives something

How does it feel when he does find a **rare** addition to one of his collections?

"It's a sudden rush," he said, "like falling down the hill of a roller coaster."

His advice to other Iowa collectors: "If you find something you enjoy, see if they have stuff and try collecting it," he said. Grant added that new collectors shouldn't get discouraged when they can't find things to add to their collections. "Just keep looking!" ■

— Michelle Rubin

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For collectors who need a little help getting started, The Goldfinch offers the following advice.

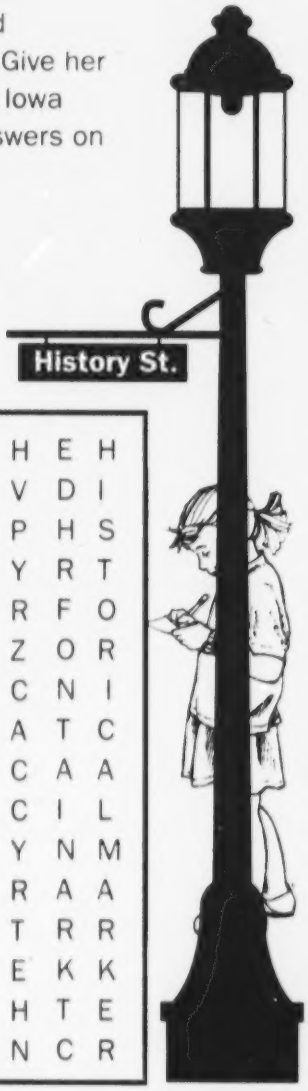
Keep a list of all items in your collection, including a description of each item, where and when you found it, and the cost.

The next time you're visiting a museum or other historical site, make a list of the collections you see on display. What do these items tell you about the lives of Iowans in history?

IOWA HISTORY WORD FIND

The Iowa Investigator has finished her search for Iowa history. She's found clues and rounded up history makers. Now she's busy writing her report. Give her a hand by completing the word find below. All the words are tools used in an Iowa history investigation. The words go up, down, diagonally, and backwards. Answers on page 30.

HISTORICAL MARKER	MUSEUM	COLLECTION	RELATIVES
TAPE RECORDER	NOTEBOOK	PENCIL	LIBRARY
MAGNIFYING GLASS	IMAGINATION	ORAL HISTORY	THE GOLDFINCH



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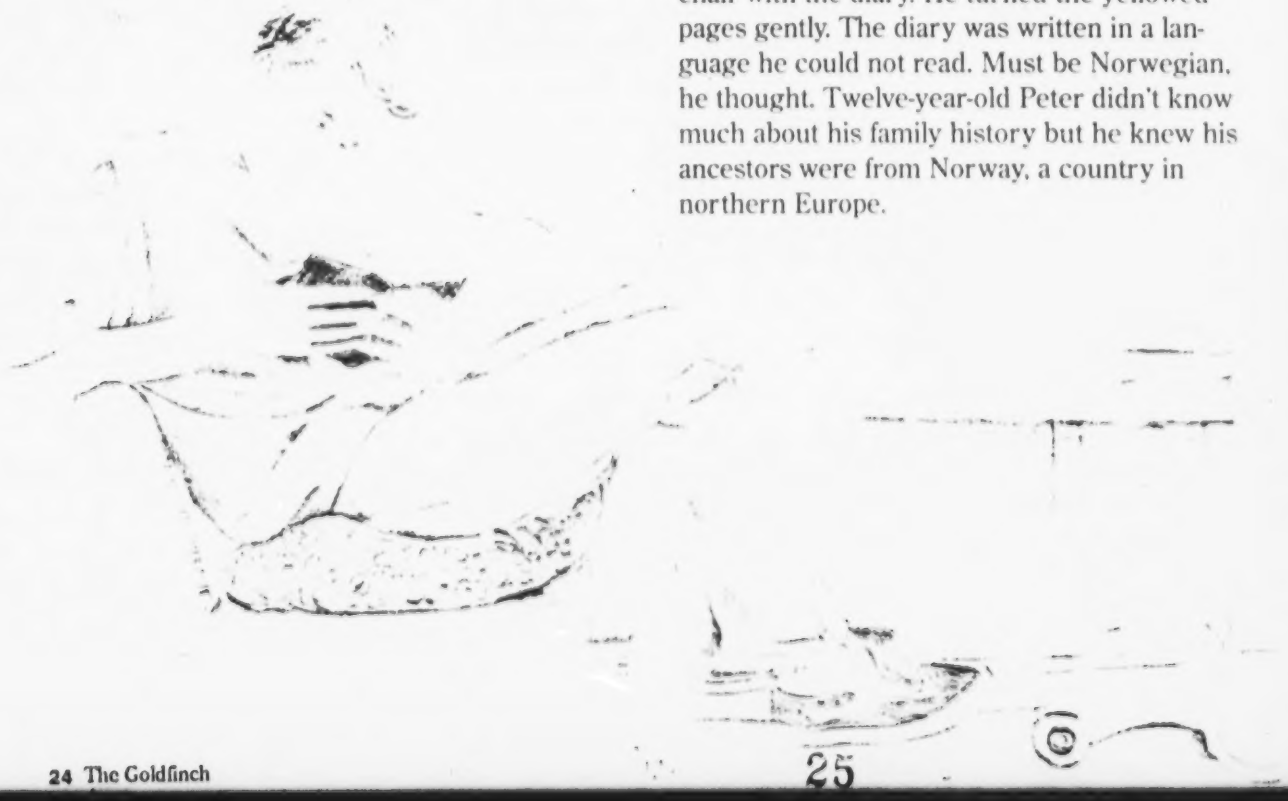
Attic Adventures

by Amy Ruth

Peter Nelson wasn't looking for Iowa history, but it must have been looking for him! While poking around his grandmother's attic in Council Bluffs, Iowa, he found a brown leather diary belonging to someone called Linka (Lyn-KAH) Halverson, a beat-up photograph of two men in a goofy-looking car, and a television guide from a 1953 *Des Moines Register.*

What had started as a boring day had turned into an Iowa history adventure, complete with cool treasures! Peter settled into a faded armchair with the diary. He turned the yellowed pages gently. The diary was written in a language he could not read. Must be Norwegian, he thought. Twelve-year-old Peter didn't know much about his family history but he knew his ancestors were from Norway, a country in northern Europe.



Suddenly, he recognized English words:

Here begins the translation of my girlhood diary written so many years ago. This is my way of preserving our family history for my grandchildren.

March 8, 1901

Linka Halverson Erickson, born May 6, 1843

Peter turned the page and entered another world.

August 15, 1855

We arrived in the place called Washington Prairie eight days ago. It is in the northeastern part of the state called Iowa in America. It is to be our new home. **Mor** is still weak from the long train ride from New York and the wagon ride from Wisconsin.

Lars and Hans were just as happy as I was to leave the crowded railroad car in Wisconsin where **Far** bought a wagon and team of oxen to carry us to Iowa.

When we arrived here, I saw that the tales we heard in Norway were true. Prairie stretched for miles like a sea of grass. A little stream runs across our land and beyond that there are trees that will give us firewood and lumber. Our life will be better here.

Although it is crowded, we are all living in the wagon until Far can build a cabin. Far and the boys must first clear the prairie of the tangled grass and weeds. That is the only way to get to the rich dirt beneath it so the land will be ready to plant next spring. And Mor will plant a garden with potatoes and beets and onions just like she did at home.

September 6, 1855

Far and the boys work from daybreak to sunset, digging out the tangled grasses with shovels and chopping wood for winter. It is not so hot today.

Each morning Mor and I start the fire outside and make coffee, pancakes, and fried pork. I run to the stream with a pail to get water. After breakfast, we do the washing, gather berries and wild grapes, check the rabbit traps, and search for firewood. At noon I take a meal to Far and the boys. It refreshes them and puts smiles on their faces.

I have found a nice wild strawberry patch. Mor and I will dry the fruit in the sun and it will make a nice winter treat.

Norwegian-English Dictionary:

These are some of the Norwegian words Peter read in Linka's diary:

Mor — Mother
Far — Father
Morfar — Grandfather (Linka's mother's father)

Attic Adventures

October 12, 1855

The days are colder and at night the wind roars, but I do not mind so much as we are safe in our new cabin!

Mr. Peterson, a man who knew **Morfar** in Norway, came last week with an Englishman. They brought two axes and quickly got to work with Far and the boys. They chopped trees, split the logs, and cut them smooth. When twilight came we had such a merry time feasting on salt pork and the potatoes Mr. Peterson brought as a gift.

The men slept out by the fire that night, and I watched with envy from the wagon. Hans and Lars are older and Mor let them sleep under the stars, too.

The next day they were at work before Mor and I had fixed breakfast. By that evening our little home was complete. It measures 14 feet by 16 feet. There are two windows. Mor and I helped stop up the cracks between the logs with grass and mud. Far and the boys travelled to Decorah and brought back a stove.

Far built a little loft where the boys and I will sleep on our straw mattress. He promises to make proper furniture this winter.

Our oxen will be safe and warm, too. The Englishman, who has lived here for more than

ten years, will keep them in his barn for the winter. In exchange, Mor will give him fresh vegetables from her garden next year.

December 22, 1855

Far and the boys arrived home safely yesterday from McGregor! This is going to be the best Christmas ever! They were half frozen, having walked the last 11 miles in one day. They found work chopping firewood and doing other odd jobs. Far managed to save enough money in one month to buy coffee, flour, bacon, and even some yarn for Mor to make caps and mittens.

While Far and the boys ate a hearty meal and then collapsed into bed, Mor and I sat down to our new task. We were determined to knit as many mittens and caps as possible before Christmas, and we stayed up late into the night working. Tonight we sit by the fire, cozy in our new home. The others are reading *Emigranten*, an American newspaper published in Norwegian! The date is in June, and it is very worn. Far said it has passed through many hands before it came to us. But none of us cares! It is a nice reminder of home.

Home. I must smile a little. I am home. And I am happy to be here, though the future holds so many uncertainties for us. The boys and I will learn English and go to school. And Far has a lot of work ahead of him. Bad weather or grasshoppers could ruin our crops.

The English translation ended there, and Peter slowly closed the book. "How did this old diary make its way from a tiny cabin on the prairie to grandmother's attic?" he wondered aloud. ■

Stay tuned! This story continues in the next issue of *The Goldfinch*.

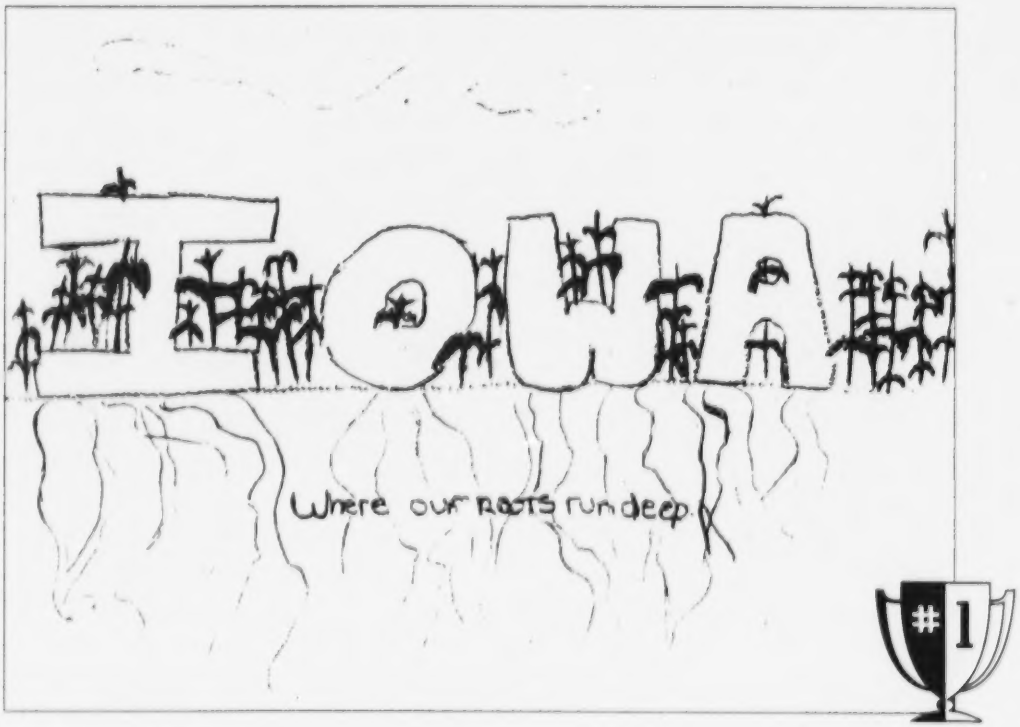
Your turn

1. Why did the Halversons move to Iowa?
2. How long had Iowa been a state in 1855?
3. How old was Linka in 1855?
4. How old was she when she translated her diary?
5. Why did Far and the boys go to McGregor?
6. How can Peter learn more about Linka Halverson?

HISTORY MAKERS

by Michelle Rubin

Two years ago, the Iowa Sesquicentennial (SESS-kwuh-sen-tenn-ee-ull) Commission held a contest for Iowans to design a **logo** to celebrate Iowa's 150th birthday. As part of our own celebration, we are publishing the winning Junior category logo (below), designed by Laura Thompson of Iowa City, and a few other favorites. The entries made us proud of Iowa's junior designers. They're all number one with us!



THE WINNER! Laura Thompson
Thirteen-year-old Laura, who will start eighth grade at South East Junior High School in Iowa City this fall, was 11 when she entered the contest. How does it feel to have won? "Proud!" she said.

Design a logo for your community!

logo — design that symbolizes something

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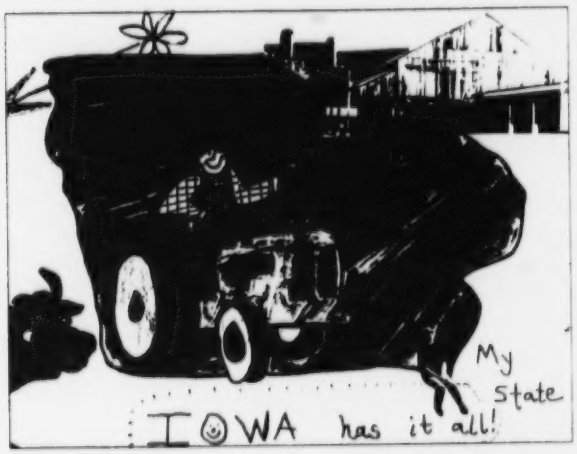
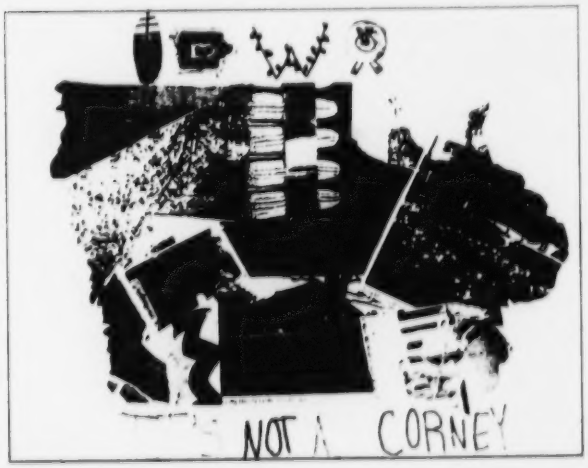
HISTORY MAKERS



JENNA'S STATE by Jenna Skophammer
Jenna was 7 years old when she designed her logo. We especially liked the picture of Jenna, sitting on the southeastern edge of Iowa. Jenna will be a fourth grader at St. Paul's Elementary School in Fort Dodge this fall.



PRAIRIE PARTY by Evan Anderson
Ten-year-old Evan designed his logo to look like "American Gothic," the famous painting by Iowa artist Grant Wood. Evan is a big fan of the artist and thinks Wood's artwork represents Iowa well. Evan attends Arthur Elementary School in Cedar Rapids.

NOT ALL CORNEY by Theresa Drey
Twelve-year-old Theresa said her collage was inspired by looking through old magazines about Iowa and thinking about all of the things that make up the state. Theresa will be a seventh-grader this fall in Council Bluffs.

Look for more Iowa art by Iowa kids in the next issue of *The Goldfinch*!

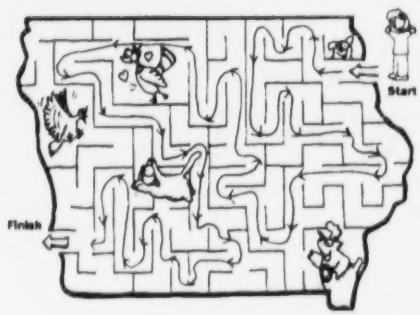
Take Goldie's Challenge! Write a book review about part or all of a book about Iowa. The first five readers who send us their book reviews by October 1, 1995, will receive a surprise gift. Remember to include your name, age, grade, address, phone number, school name, and the title of the book you read. Send book reviews to: Goldie's Challenge, *The Goldfinch*, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

Some good books to read and review:

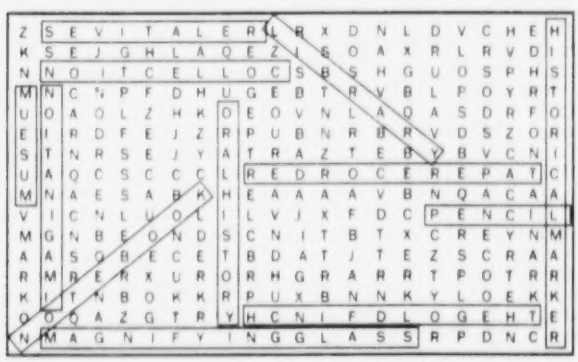
Iowa, by Rita LaDoux, 1992.

America the Beautiful: Iowa, by Deborah Kent, 1993.

Answers:



Rosie is traveling west, away from Wisconsin, and toward Nebraska.



What Next?

Continue your search for Iowa history! Look for the following issues of *The Goldfinch* at your school or public library.

"Iowa's Ethnic Roots," April 1991

"Doing Local History," Winter 1992

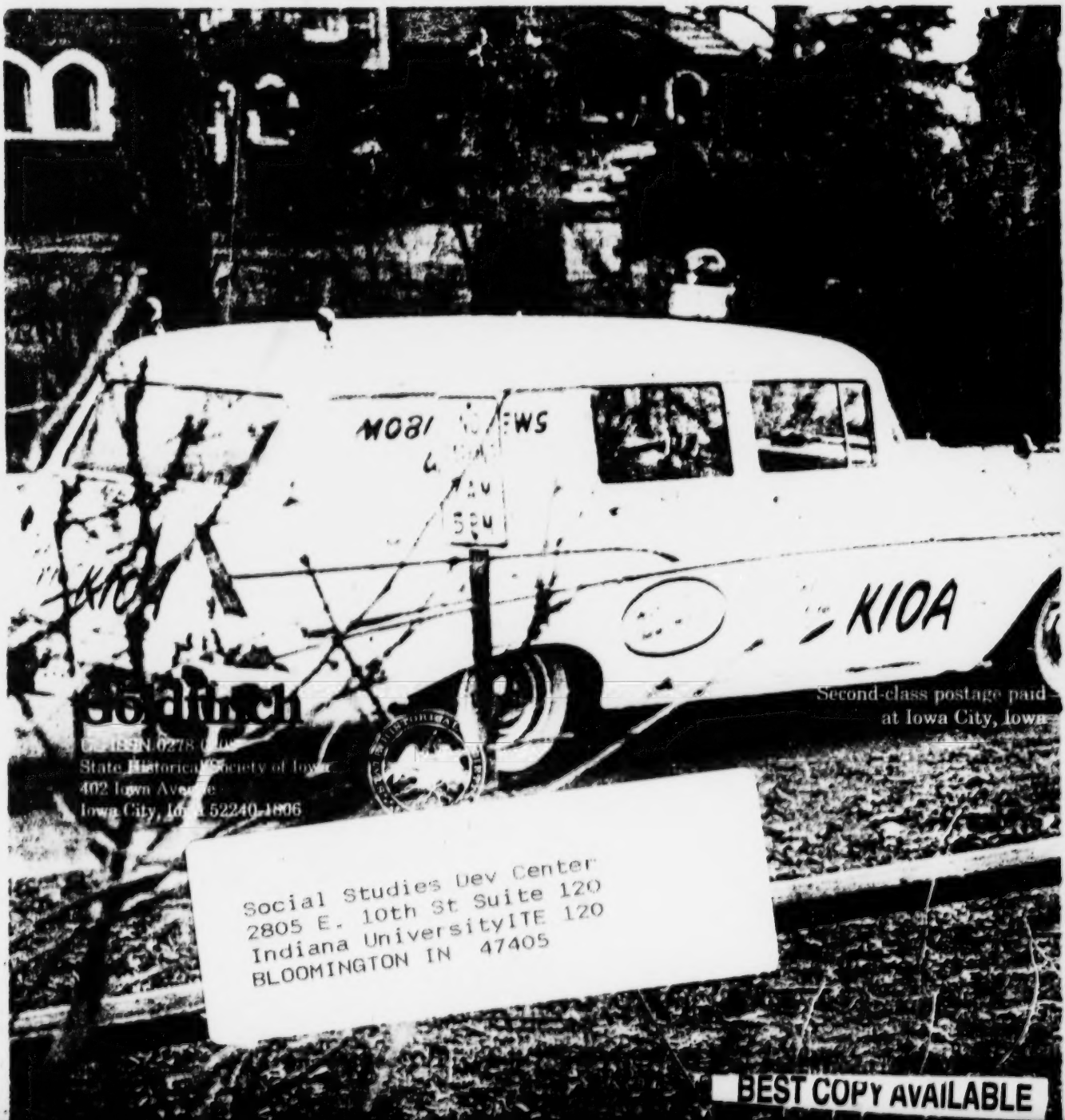
"Homes in History," Fall 1993

"State Symbols," Spring 1995

These and other issues of *The Goldfinch* may also be purchased from the State Historical Society of Iowa. For more information write to Publication Sales, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240, or call 319-335-3916.

The Roost

LOOKIE HERE, GOLDIE! THERE'S MY GREAT GREAT GREAT GRANNY ROSE!!
WHY DOES SHE LOOK SO FUNNY?
THIS PICTURE IS OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OLD!
EVERYBODY LOOKED THAT WAY A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
NONE OF MY RELATIVES LOOKED THAT GOOOFY!!
SNICKER SNICKER
WELL, GOLDFINCHES HAVE ALWAYS LOOKED THE SAME!
POKE
BESIDES, YOU TURNED OUT PRETTY GOOOFY!
HA HA HA! THAT'S HYSTERICAL!
POUNCE!
No, THAT'S HISTORICAL!
AAGHHH!
WHOOOSH!
JERRY BROWN



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